

DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers.

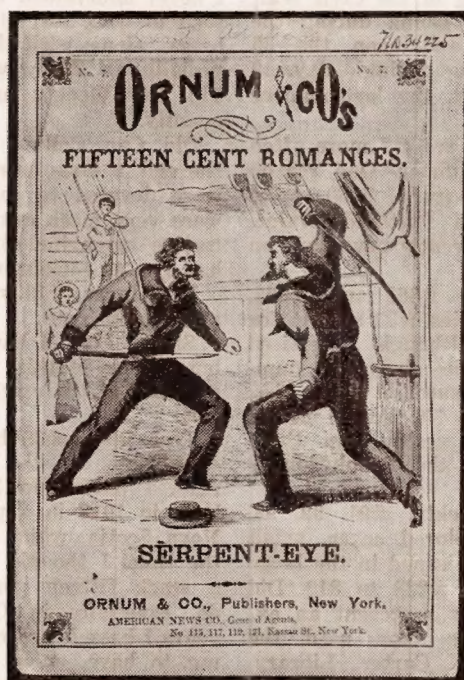
Vol. 41 No. 8

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Whole No. 479

Dime Novel Sidelights

By Ralph P. Smith



DIME NOVEL SKETCHES NO. 151

ORNUM & CO'S FIFTEEN CENT ROMANCES

Publisher: Ornum & Co., Beckman St., New York (Norman L. Munro). Issues: 25 (highest number seen advertised). Dates: 1872 (of 4 numbers examined, Nos. 4, 7, 9 and 12 all were undated. The first two bore copyright date of 1872). Schedule of Issues: Not known. Size: 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x5 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. Price: 15c. Pages: 100. Illustrations: Colored pictorial cover repeated in black and white as frontispiece. Contents: Pirate, border, Indian and a sprinkling of sensational love stories.

Dime Novel Sidelights

By Ralph P. Smith

During the sixty years that I have been a collector of dime novels, a great many odd and curious facts have been noted from time to time. Many of these facts are known to most collectors, but perhaps some of them will be new, especially to those just starting out to collect them. Neither I, nor anyone else, I guess, can add anything to Prof. Johannsen's great work on the Beadle publications, so I will omit mention of them in this paper.

Adventure Weekly. Phil and Ralph jump from fighting in the Civil War, to go overseas to China during the Boxer Uprising, and span the 35 years without aging a single day. 19 numbers to the set, the last number very rare.

Dick Dobbs. You see #7 more often than any other number. One reason is that I found a stack of 50 copies of this number in Portland, Maine, around 1915. Apparently never put on sale anywhere.

Brave and Bold #362 and #363, printed Motor Stories #33 and 34 for the first time. Although advertised in Motor Stories, the above two numbers were never issued in that series.

Liberty Boys of '76. As a matter of interest, this weekly ran three times longer than the Revolutionary War ran itself.

Nick Carter Weekly. #91, 92, 93, and 94 in this colored cover, small sized weekly, were issued in the large size, the same as #228 to 819. Did these four numbers represent an experiment? Perhaps they used the plates from Nick Carter Library, which was the large size. At any rate these four never appeared in the cur-

rent size of all the Street and Smith libraries. I have never been able to find out what happened to these numbers when the quarterlies were issued, whether they were omitted, or reprinted to the small size for that purpose. At any rate, they are rare ones.

New Tip Top Weekly contained the serial, reprinted from its first and only appearance in Top Notch Magazine, "The Autobiography of Cap'n Wiley." This was by Patten, and one of the funniest stories I ever read. I never understood why it was not issued in book form in New Medal Library, along with the Merriwells, especially as Wiley was introduced in Tip Top Weekly and appeared frequently.

Old Cap Collier Library. Towards the end, a large number of the issues were devoted to comic stories. They were very much out of place in a detective magazine. Originally, they all had run as serials in Golden Hours.

Paul Jones. #19 was the last number and seldom seen.

Starry Flag. I have a copy of #20, but outside of this, I have never seen or heard of the existence of this number.

True Blue. #39 has been found in quantities, but the other issues are rare. I picked up 20 copies of #39 back in 1912 in a periodical store in Nova Scotia, which I was visiting at the time. I thought it strange to see a stack fifteen years old, and still do, especially in Canada. Over the years I have heard of collectors claiming to have, or to have seen, copies up to #54. Personally, I never saw any above #50, and believe the series

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ends there.

Tip Top Weekly. #824 to 830 were rewritten from Tip Top #40, 44, 46, 79, 80, 81 and 85. Dick Merriwell was Universal Coach at Yale, and the hero, Jim Phillips replaced the Frank Merriwell of the earlier numbers, while Dick Merriwell was very much in the background. This caused so much criticism the publishers had to announce that no more reprints would be used after #830.

Wide Awake Library. #139 and 140 were issued in a much larger page size than the other 1351 numbers. Why, I cannot say, but it raised a pretty problem for the binder.

War Library. There were 513 numbers issued, but only about 150 original stories. Some were reprinted as many as four times during the eight years of its existence; nearly all at least once. It's tricky trying to trace them however, as the titles and subtitles are entirely changed in some instances.

Wild West Weekly. Around #630, Young Wild West forsook the frontier and his Mexican and Indian friends, and crossed the ocean with a show. He left about 1870 and arrived in Europe in 1914 just in time to get involved with the War. It was surely the slowest voyage on record—nearly fifty years—but he and his friends happily did not age a bit. They got out before the United States got involved, but nothing has been heard from him since, as the series started reprinting after the war series. And, of all the dime novels still being published, this is the only one that took any notice whatsoever of World War I.

Young Rover. #53 is the last number, and a hard one to find.

The cover of Tip Top Weekly #169 shows Frank Merriwell on the deck of a ship. He has just laid down a copy of Ainslee's Magazine, which he had been reading, and I regret to say that he marked his place, by putting the magazine, opened up, printed matter flat on the deck; something no collector would ever do. He may have had an excuse, as the villain was creeping up on him; but the

main reason was to advertise Ainslee's to the readers of Tip Top.

Street and Smith had just acquired this magazine from the Howard Ainslee Co. According to Mott, in his History of American Magazines, the magazine started with the title of "The Yellow Kid" in 1897, changed to Yellow Book later in the year, and became Ainslee's Magazine in 1898, shortly afterward being sold to Street and Smith.

I doubt if many dime novel collectors cared much for Ainslee's. It contained stories and articles more of interest to the general reading public and was not particularly sensational. But, some well known writers wrote for it, and after Street and Smith obtained it, they did run some Nick Carter stories in it, starting in November 1900. This was a series under the general heading "The Adventures of Nicholas Carter." I no longer have any Ainslee's, so cannot give more information on this, other than the series ran for eight or more issues, as I remember it.

There seems to have been some connection between the two firms from the beginning. The nickel novels "Army & Navy Weekly," and "Half Holiday," although published by Howard, Ainslee & Co., were of similar style as Tip Top Weekly, and the type face used in the novels were the same. Perhaps Street & Smith did the printing for Ainslee & Co. At any rate, they were off the same presses, apparently, with the exception that the Ainslee novels had considerable glossy paper instead of the usual pulp. Long after Half Holiday folded up, Tip Top and other Street and Smith novels of that period, contained from time to time, four pages or more of the glossy paper previously used in Half Holiday, as though they had a number of rolls on hand and were using it up, little by little. It is not unusual to find an old Tip Top with most of the pages brown or brittle, but with four or eight pages of glossy paper still in perfect condition.

The reason for the use of calendered (or, glossy) paper in the Ainslee novels, was on account of the half-tone

illustrations, which would not print very well on pulp stock. Some magazines today use two types of paper for that reason; the pictures are printed on high quality glossy paper, the reading matter section being of different stock. American Heritage is a good example of this.

The boys of the time had as little use for general magazines such as Ainslee's, as they did for women's fashion magazines; but there were some exceptions to this, and Street & Smith's Popular Magazine was one. A whole library of clothbound books could have been made from the serials that were published in Popular before 1912. The best of B. M. Bower, Holman Day, Anna Katherine Green, Zane Grey, H. Rider Haggard, Emerson Hough, Jack London, Francis Lynde, E. Phillips Oppenheim, Frank L. Packard, Ralph D. Paine, William MacLeod Raine, Bertrand W. Sinclair, H. DeVerre Stacpoole, Louis Joseph Vance, Charles E. Van Loon, H. G. Wells, and Stewart Edward White, were only a few of the big names who wrote serials for Popular that were afterward issued in book form.

A strange event occurred in Popular in June 1909, when Burt L. Standish's serial, "Bill Bruce of Harvard" commenced, and ran for six issues. Here the creator of Frank Merriwell, the Yale hero, and nemesis of Harvard, writes a story where the hero is a Harvard man. This was afterwards published in book form, but I have never seen a copy.

At this late date, republishing some of the early stories must be done with some attention paid to the slang of the period. What once may have been a compliment, may have a different significance today. When I was a boy, a chicken was a slang term for a beautiful girl. If you call anyone a chicken today, you intimate that he is a coward.

When anyone called Frank Merriwell "a daisy," it meant that he was tops in his field, but today you had better be ready to run, if you refer to anyone in those terms. Tip Top No. 191 "Frank Merriwell's Generosity; or, Square as a Brick," refers to his in-

tegrity; surely nobody today would think of Frank Merriwell as a "square". And if Tip Top No. 23 were reprinted, it would certainly have to have a change of title.

If I have repeated some items that have previously appeared, which I think likely, I want to apologize to the authors. This is, however, entirely from my own notes, from jottings I have made from time to time in looking over my files.

SAD NOTE

Have just received a note from Mrs. H. O. Jacobsen stating that her husband had died on May 4, 1972.

RECENTLY PUBLISHED ARTICLES CONCERNING DIME NOVELS

WHEN THE DIME NOVEL WAS A NOVELTY; or, CLUTCHED IN THE CLAWS OF THE CLICHE, by Phil Santora. In Colorto Magazine of the Sunday New York News of July 2, 1972. A superficial view of dime novels for Sunday supplement reading public. Excellently illustrated with 14 covers from the collection of I. S. Seidman, a long time member of the Happy Hour Brotherhood.

NEWS NOTES

Evidently the reprinting of the Merriwell Series Street Smith Publications has been discontinued. We have seen or heard no reports of the issuance of No. 2

THOSE WERE THE DAYS for which I had high hopes, was discontinued with No. 3.

Back numbers Reckless Ralph's Dime Novel Roundup (quite a few reprints, can't be helped). Don't have the complete set of No. 1 to 237 inclusive, but almost, lacking only a few numbers. 10c each or \$21.00 postpaid. Have at least 230 numbers or more. Also two indexes, 1 Pioneer and Scouts of the Old West, Birthday number, War Library list and Dime Novel Catalog.

Ralph F. Cummings

161 Pleasant St., So. Grafton, Mass.
01560

EXCERPTS FROM LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Eddie:

I got a great deal of pleasure out of Loft's article on TREASURE ISLAND. It sure brought back memories of quieter days—when pirates and outlaws were mostly in books, and not on every street corner.

I first read Treasure Island one Christmas—either in 1909 or 1910. Anyway, I was just spending 10c a week on the Alger books in the Five-and-Ten cent store—just getting introduced to Merriwell, by way of Tip Top—and already owning THE ROVER BOYS AT SCHOOL, and hoping to get the half dozen others that were then available.

We were at my aunt's for dinner, and I had inadvertently left at home, the big size Alger I got for Christmas. My aunt saw me moping around (as I was the only juvenile there), and dug out a copy of Treasure Island for me to read. Believe me, I read that book with bulging eyes and bated breath! She let me take it home to finish it.

Here are some strange facts. (1) I don't think I ever read it again until yesterday. (2) Although many editions have passed through my hands in sixty years, I never owned a copy in my own collection; although one of my sons had one as a boy. I had a junky reprint yellowed copy on my "for sale" list years ago—this I found down cellar, and read.

As I remember my aunt's copy, it was rather a large page sized book—almost as big as a Tip Top, with fairly large print, and a lot of illustrations throughout the text. Even in those days it was well worn and shaken. I never saw it again.

Sometime I may run across a copy that will resemble this one, and I'll probably buy it if it is as I remembered it. One thing I know—it will have to be dated back of 1910—may even have been a first edition. At my age, I won't put much dough into it, so I'll have something else to look for at flea-markets, auctions, etc.

What triggered off this letter to

you, is that at one time I had a complete, or nearly complete file of YOUNG FOLKS (Henderson). I remember most of the years were bound in volumes. It later changed the name to YOUNG AND OLD, and ceased being 100% juvenile paper. I had some duplicate runs, and single copies. I sold the complete run, and many short runs years ago. I remembered, however, that I had a short run left in my stack in the cellar. Luck was with me. The run was #542 to 603, and happily I grabbed it up and added it to my personal file. In excellent condition, I am well pleased with it. I never gave it much attention, and never knew that "Treasure Island" started there. See how one can have a "blind spot."

I checked the illustrations. Lofts is correct, but it is a debateable point about them. There is really only one fair-sized picture. The other is a small picture of a sailor with a large letter "S". In other words, the first word, "Squire," has the first letter in a block about 1 by two inches—you know how they used to illuminate the first letter in old books.

Sincerely, Ralph Smith,
Lawrence, Mass.

OLD PULP MAGAZINES WANTED

Such as Doc Savage, Shadow, Spider, Unknown, Phantom, Western Story, Wild West, G-8, Wings, "spicy" mag; and many others in the all-fiction field. Must be in excellent condition. What have you? Send list and price wanted. No comics or books.

Back Numbers

Box 214, Little Rock, Ark. 72203

FOR SALE

Merriwell stories in Tip Top Weekly. Early and late numbers. Send want list; too many to catalog. Good condition and reasonable prices. Also WANTED: in nice condition, Magnet and New Magnet Library and Merriwell Series.

GUINON

Box 214, Little Rock, Ark. 72203

FROM BOXES TO SHELVES
or
HOW TO KNOW WHAT YOU HAVE
by Jack R. Schorr

I had for some time many, many books in boxes stacked on the floor in my back room. I had also many books double shelved, which I always disliked, because they weren't readily seen or available. Their condition I had forgotten as time went on. I keep a looseleaf note book on all books I have with data on publisher, date, condition, etc., but this doesn't take the place of seeing what you have.

I finally came to the realization that things couldn't go on like this so I went down and bought enough 1x6 inch boards to shelve from floor to ceiling an 18x12 foot room, around, under, and over windows. It was a terrible job of packing books into boxes, one wall at a time while that wall was shelved. Then replacing the books on the new shelves. I had shelves but they were placed on bricks and went up about 6 to 7 feet. These served the purpose well for awhile, but there was wasted space this way, especially when the bricks were on ends and in the middle of the shelves. I had the shelves 8½ inches apart, and about 36 inches long, the horizontal shelves held by five 2½ inch finishing nails. These held very well without cleats and with very little sag. The 6 inch uprights were measured so they fit very securely from floor to ceiling and were toenailed in. There is a great deal of weight on shelves 8 feet high, so the sections must be nailed to each other, plus toenailing them to the ceiling.

It didn't take as long as I thought, thanks to my wife, who helped me measure and do the planning. It only takes about 40 minutes to nail together and put up an 8-foot x 36-inch section.

After I got it finished, I found I had room for all the books I had, plus the ones in boxes. I have empty places on shelves—a collector's dream. The great thrill came in being able to arrange all the Stratemeyers including Chapman, Young, Dawson, Dixon, Keene, Bonchill, Winfield, Appleton, Rockwell all in one section of the room with room to spare.

I came across books I had forgotten about that I had picked up and stored. One thing I noticed was the condition of some of the books I haven't seen for a while some were not as good as I remembered. I will have some replacing to do here and there.

It makes your collection more enjoyable. It's out where you can see it. If I didn't have the room out back, I wouldn't hesitate to put shelves like this up along one or two walls in the living room and dining room. I would stain the boards and with the attractive book covers in some of the series, it would make an attractive decor, especially in this age of nostalgia, and they are sure to be top notch conversation pieces.

MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

- 357 George Wuyek, 115-70 237th St., Elmont, New York 11003 (New member)
 266 Harold L. Hilss, c/o Simonetti, 285 Norfeld Blvd., Elmont, N. Y. 11003
 (New address)
 358 Elvin Smith Jr., 552 Peters Drive, Elizabethtown, Ky. 42701 (New mem.)
 175 Daniel J. Fuller, 135 N. Lincoln Kent Ohio 44240 (New address)
 359 Carl O. Thieme 3216 S. 56th St., Milwaukee, Wis. 53219 (New member)
 347 John Scott, Pentui House, Pill Creek Feock Truro Cornwall England
 (Change in address)
 360 Dick Borkowski, The Episcopal Academy, 401 City Line Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19131 (New member)

WANTED—Cloth Bound Books by following Authors

- William Murray Graydon**, pub. by D. McKay. The Cryptogram, From Lake to Wilderness, In Barracks and Wigwam, The Rajah's Fortress, The White King of Africa, With Boer and Britisher, The Butcher of Cawnpore, Campaigning with Braddock. Pub. by Penn. Pub. Co., In the Days of Washington, With Puritan and Pequot. Pub. by McClure Phillips & Co., The Princess of the Purple Palace.
- Frank H. Converse**. The Adventures of Tad, pub. by D. Lothrop & Co., Happy-go-Lucky Jack and Heir to a Million pub. Leather Clad Tales. In Southern Sear, Medal Library. The Lost Gold Mine, Penn. Book Co.
- Oliver Optic**. Snug Harbor, A Floating Million, The Young Navigator, In the Saddle, Up and Down the Nile, Asiatic Breezes, Out West, all pub. by Lee and Shepard.
- Kirk Monroe**. Big Cypress, Brethren of the Coast, Cab and Caboose, Canoe Mates, The Coral Ship, Derrick Sterling, The Flamingo Feather, For the Mikado, Midshipman Stuart, The Outcast Warrior, The Painted Desert, Raft Mates, Shine Terrill, A Son of Satsuma, Under Orders.
- Harry Castlemon**. Rodney the Overseer, War Series, The Express Rider, Pony Express Series.
- James Otis**. An Island Refuge.

All these books must be in clean and in fine or better condition.

State price, postage paid. All letters answered.

CHESTER G. MAYO

Wild Acres

Huntington, Vermont 05462

WANTED

Any information on the life of Capt. Frederick Whittaker (1838-1889), and the location of collections of his novels.

M. K. Hammond
606 S. Allen St.

State College, Pa. 16801

WANTED

Any issues of New Story Magazine and All Around Magazine.

Andrew Zerbe

P. O. Box 6004, Montgomery, Ala
36106

FOR SALE

Complete Science-Fiction magazine library, Astounding, Amazing, Wonder, Startling Future, Unknown, going back to 1928. One owner.

John Deneka

42 West 18th St.,
Bayonne, N. J. 07002

FOR SALE

Books by Joseph C. Lincoln, C. E. Mulford, Sabatini, J. Farnol, H. Allen Smith. Prefer to sell in lots.

Daniel A. Bundza
31 Stoneleigh Road
Worcester, Mass. 01606

FOR SALE

Wild West, Secret Service, Nick Carter, Diamond Dick, Liberty Boys, Buffalo Bill and many other dime novels

Mrs. J. Edward Leithead
5109 Cedar Ave.
Philadelphia, Pa. 19143

FOR SALE

Tousey Weeklies: Pluck and Luck, Wild West Weeklies, Comic Library and others.

Street & Smith: Brave and Bold and others.

Westbrook: Old Sleuth Weekly.

George Sahr
7001 31st Ave.
Kenosha, Wis. 53140

FOR SALE

Back numbers "Readers Digest" also S&S's Boys of America 20 through 40
"Popular Mechanics" cheap. and 51 through 69.

Eli A. Messier

Box 1122, Woonsocket, R. I. 02895

Frank Acker

12 Cooke St.

Providence, R. I. 02906

FOR SALE

EDWARD T. LE BLANC — 87 School St. — Fall River, Mass. 02720

Postpaid. Satisfaction guaranteed or money refunded.

10% discount of net sales of \$10 or more. 25% discount net sales of \$50.

BAKER, WILLARD F.

Bob Dexter and the Beacon Beach Mystery. Cupples & Leon. Good.	
Black and white frontispiece	2.00
Bob Dexter and the Beacon Beach Mystery. Cupples & Leon, Good.	
Colored frontispiece	2.50
Bob Dexter and the Storm Mountain Mystery. C&L. Fair	1.50
Bob Dexter and the Storm Mountain Mystery. C&L. Good	2.00
Boy Ranchers, The. C&L. Good	1.50
Boy Ranchers Among the Indians. C&L. Good	2.00
Boy Ranchers on Roaring River. C&L. Good. Frontispiece missing	1.50
Boy Ranchers on Roaring River, C&L. Good	2.00
Boy Ranchers on the Trail. C&L. Good. Front end paper missing	1.50

BARBOUR, RALPH H.

Captain of the Crew. Appleton-Century. Red brown cover. Very good.	3.00
Captain of the Crew. Appleton. Green cover. Good	2.50
Captain of the Crew. Appleton. Red brown cover. Good	2.50
Center Rush Rowland, G&D. Brown cover. Good	2.50
Crimson Sweater, The. Century. Tan cover. Excellent	3.00
Crimson Sweater, The. Century. Tan covers. Worn cond. former libr.	1.50
Danger Ahead. Revell. Green covers. Very good	3.00
For the Honor of the School. G&D. Every Boys Library. Good former library	1.50
For the Honor of the School. G&D. Purple covers. Good	2.00
Fortune of the Team, The. Houghton Mifflin. Good, shows a little wear	2.00
Four Afloat. Appleton. Good. Shows some wear	2.50
Four Afoot. Appleton. Good	2.50
Four In Camp. Appleton. Very Good	3.00
Grantham Gets On. Appleton. Good, shows wear	2.00
Half-Back, The. Appleton, Fair. Brown cover, 1901	2.00
Half-Back The. Appleton, VG. Red cover 1899	3.50
Half-Back The. Appleton. Good. Brown cover, 1906	3.00
Harry's Island. The Centry Co., 1916. VG	3.00
Left End Edwards. G&D. Good	2.00
Left End Edwards. G&D. Fair	1.50
Left Guard Gilbert. G&D. Orange covers. Excellent	2.50
Left Half Harmon. G&D. Fair, former library	1.00
Quarterback Bates. G&D. Fair	1.50
Right End Emerson. G&D. Good	2.00
Right Guard Grant. G&D. Good front end paper missing	2.00
Right Guard Grant. G&D. Fair	1.50
Tod Hale on the Scrub. Dodd-Mead. VG	3.00
Tod Hale on the Scrub. G&D. Excellent, d/j	3.00